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Annex "A," Subparagraph 2g,
Political Background

PROPAGANDA AND PUBLIC INFORMATION

●208 Influenced by Lenin's teachings, the Chinese Communist regime believes in and practices coercion and persuasion. By means of coercion it suppresses opposition and compels obedience. But it is through persuasion that it attempts to change the attitudes and win the support of the masses. One of the Communists' method of winning popular support is propaganda.

Like everything else under the Communist regime, propaganda is strictly directed and controlled by a central authority, especially with regard to issues and themes. With a few exceptions, issues and themes of propaganda are the same for the whole country. Once the central authority has chosen an issue or theme to propagandize, the nationwide propaganda machinery is set in motion toward that common goal.

Reserving the issues and propaganda themes of a national character for detailed analysis in the HRAF handbook on China as a whole, the present survey of propaganda work in North China will be directed primarily toward the propaganda machinery operating in the region, for only in an investigation of the development and operation of specific propaganda machinery

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208 can we uncover regional variations.

In the course of this survey an attempt will be made to show the extent to which the people of North China are kept informed of public affairs and to what extent the information is permeated with propaganda.

I. THE ADMINISTRATION OF PROPAGANDA

208 647 Prior to the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war in 1937, Communist propaganda work in North China, especially in metropolitan cities such as Peiping and Tientsin, was intensive and influential. But such propaganda work at that time was carried on by underground Communist agents and Communist front organizations. Following the outbreak of the war, Communist party organizations began to function openly in many places in North China where Communist guerilla forces had their bases. From that time on, Communist propaganda work was in the main directly controlled and conducted by the propaganda organs of the Party; and local governments established by the Communists in various places played only a comparatively insignificant role in this regard. This state of affairs, however, underwent a great change upon the establishment of the Communist regime in Peking in 1949. Since then, propaganda in the North China region has been administered under a dual system consisting of the apparatus of the Communist Party of China and of the government at different levels.

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647 Two agencies existed prior to the abolition, in August 1954, of the regional authorities within both the governmental and party hierarchies: the Department of Propaganda of the North China Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and the Department of Cultural and Educational Affairs of the regional government. Although these organizations took orders from their respective superiors on both the national and regional levels, the relationship between them appears to have been similar to that between the Department of Propaganda of the Central Committee and the Commission on Cultural and Educational Affairs of the Government Administration Council on the national level[1]

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1. Specifically, the Department of Propaganda of the North China Bureau of the Central Committee operated under the direction of the bureau itself and of the Department of Propaganda of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. The Department of Cultural and Educational Affairs was directed by the North China Administrative Committee and by the Commission on Cultural and Educational Affairs of the Government Administration Council of the Central People's Government.

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To put it more concretely, prior to August 1954 the Department or Propaganda of the North China Bureau of the Party, like its counterpart on the national level was not primarily an operational agency. It did not do any major publishing nor did it operate any radio sation or cinema. It was devoted to the transmission of the propaganda policy of its superiors to appropriate agencies on the regional and provincial levels, drew up regional plans for the execution of the policy, and supervised the execution of that policy in each region by the Party, government, and mass organizations which operated the media of propaganda.

As for the department of Cultural and Educational Affairs of the North China Administrative Committee, its functions were essentially the same as those of its counterparts on the national level. It was charged with the responsibility of the day-to-day management of propaganda as it found its expression in cultural and educational activities.

More specifically, the Department of Propaganda of the North China Bureau of the Communist Party of China served primarily as a regional representative of the central authorities of the Party in the supervision of the execution of propaganda policy of a national nature, while the Department of Cultural and Educational Affairs of the North China Administrative Committee acted, to a large extent, as the chief regional executor of that policy in the region. But with regard to propaganda issues of a regional nature, the

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208 Department of Propaganda of the North China
647 Bureau of the Party was the policy-maker. Its policies regarding regional propaganda issues became the policy of the region and were carried out by the Department of Cultural and Educational Affairs of the Central-South China Administrative Committee. This was achieved not by direct orders but by placing its own men in the latter organization. For example, when the regional authorities were in existence, Chang P'an-shih served as the principal link between the Department of Propaganda of the North China Bureau of the Party and the Department of Cultural and Educational Affairs of the North China Administrative Committee by heading both organizations concurrently. This was perfectly in line with the practice of the Communist Party of China of exercising leadership over the government on the China Mainland.

Such a dual system for the administration of propaganda is found on all local levels within the region. Even the lowliest Party branches or government units have their own propaganda agencies, which have the same working relationship with one another as their counterparts on the higher levels and which are supervised by their respective superior authorities. Thus, in the final analysis all local propaganda activities in the region are ultimately controlled and directed by the department of Propaganda of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. Although the above-mentioned agencies of the Party and government are charged with the responsibility of administering propagand and releasing information on public affairs, other agencies

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of the Party and government also have a certain role to play in these matters. Indeed, a considerable part of information, factual or otherwise, on the activities of individual government agencies often emanate from the agencies concerned.

II. MEDIA OF PROPAGANDA AND PUBLIC INFORMATION

Ever since the Communist armies established their guerilla warfare bases in North China after the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War, Communist propaganda agencies have been using all available means to communicate propaganda messages and information on public affairs which they want the people in North China to know. But for many years media of propaganda and public information available to the Communists in this region were meager, chiefly mimeographed newspapers, mimeographed magazines, pamphlets, posters, handbills, and so on. The only districts under Communist control at that time were in rural areas where more modern media of mass communication did not exist. But the lack of modern media of mass communication did not prevent the Communists from successfully disseminating their ideas and arousing popular sentiment sympathetic to their cause. People who visited Communist-controlled territories during the war were frequently impressed by the tremendous influence that Communist songs, Communist agitators' talks , and Communist-sponsored mass meetings had exercised upon the minds and spirits of the masses.

203 After V-J day Communist armies seized many urban centers in North China and, meanwhile, Communist propaganda agencies began to use certain modern media of mass communication such as printed newspapers, radio, and motion pictures in the conduct of their work. But the use of such modern media of mass communication at that time was very limited in scale; more extensive use did not occur there until the "liberation" of Peking and Tientsin. For obvious reasons, this discussion of propaganda and public information media is limited to those which can be best treated on a regional basis.

A. The Press as a Propaganda Medium and its Structure

204 Characterized by a high degree of specialization, the structure of the press in North China, which is but an integral part of the press in Communist China as a whole, is such as to enable each of its parts to reach specific groups of audience and serve a definite function in the socialist (and Communist) upbringing of the masses.

The press in North China is divided horizontally and vertically. The horizontal division follows very closely the hierarchical structure of the government and the Communist Party of China. At each hierarchical level there is an appropriate press to serve the Party, the government, and public organizations.

At the apex of the press pyramid is the central press, serving the central authorities in Peking. While newspapers on the central

204 Daily has been instructed to devote its space to cultural and educational news and to the exposition of the cultural and educational policies of the regime.[4] The Ta-kung Daily, once an impartial and most influential newspaper under the Kuomintang regime, is, now, under orders from Communist authorities to specialize in the dissemination and discussion of news relating to international affairs and economic problems.[5]

Subscription to the newspapers in this region are handled through the local post offices. The Communists claim that this arrangement has resulted in greater speed of delivery and a wider circulation.[6]

B. Propaganda Work of the Press

204 208 As an instrument of propaganda, the press constantly devotes a large amount of space to the publication of "lectures," documents, and other pronouncements elucidating Communist theories, the Communist Party line, and the policies of the government, with a view to remolding the ideology of the masses and influencing public attitudes on political issues. Generally, the press is given very little freedom of action. Important material is distributed to the local press by the New China News Agency. According to a regulation promulgated by the now defunct Information Administration of the Government Administration Council, all "large newspapers"

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4. Enlightenment Daily, Dec. 25, 1952.
5. Ibid.
6. Chieh-fang Jih-pao [Liberation Daily], Shanghai, March 13, 1951.

in the country must print in full the important news releases and special articles distributed by the New China News Agency.[7] The newspapers in the region, to further Communist ideology and government policies, write and publish articles supplementary to those distributed by national propaganda organs. Supplementary articles are usually written in a more popular style and expound the general themes by linking them with local issues or concrete problems whenever such an approach is permissible and feasible. In point of fact, newspapers in North China are said to be quite successful in this regard.

C. Agitation Work of the Press

The press in North China makes a constant effort to eulogize the "People's Dictatorship," Marxism, Leninism, the thought of Mao Tse-tung, and the history and contribution of the Communist Party of China. It prints ordinary news items in such a way as to inculcate in the people a feeling of national pride and to develop and unwavering faith among them in the socialist construction and socialist transformation of the

7. "Hsin-wen Tsung-shu Kuan-yü Pao-chih Ts'ai-yung Hsin-hua She Tien-kao Ti Kuei-ting" ["The Information Administration's Regulations Concerning the Use of News Releases of the New China News Agency by the Press"], People's Daily, Jan. 12, 1950.

204 country under the leadership of the Communist
208 Party of China. In treating news involving non-Communist countries, the newspapers convey to the readers that the masses of the capitalist system is on its way to destruction, and that present world tensions are all caused by capitalist warmongers, especially those in the United States. After the outbreak of the war in Korea, the anti-American campaign was played up by the press, obviously for the purpose of creating psychological tension in the minds of the Chinese people so that they might be called upon to make greater contributions and sacrifices for the attainment of the ambitious goals set by the region. More recently, the press has been preoccupied with the problem of criticizing and eliminating "bourgeois ideologies" from the minds of the people, especially the intelligentsia.

204 The most important agitation work done by
208 the newspapers concerns the acceleration of
461 production. This is achieved by summarizing and disseminating information about the most successful economic enterprises and farms and the methods and techniques of "advanced" workers and farmers; by explaining to workers and farmers the meaning of the economic measures taken by the Party and government; by bringing to the attention of the population the economic development of the nation; by glorifying the contributions of outstanding individual workers and farmers; by discussing ways and means for the solution of the difficulties facing the country

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208 in its economic construction; and by exhorting
461 the people to make even greater efforts.

D. The Press as a Medium of Public Information

204 Although the press is primarily used to conduct propaganda and agitation, it also contains a large amount of straightforward information on public affairs. As mentioned in another connection, newspapers in this region, as in Communist China as a whole, usually print the text of some important party or government decision and the text of some responsible official's report on the activities of his agency. This is particularly true in the case of the People's Daily, which serves as an official gazette of the Central People's Government. The press also features announcements concerning the commencement of some campaign, the completion of a water conservation project, or the beginning of the construction of a highway project.

True, as indicated earlier, the newspapers do not limit themselves to publishing the texts of important decisions and announcements. They seek to influence the formation of political attitudes; and for this reason they often accompany such informational material with articles to explain and justify the decisions or activities of the Party or government. But if the reader is both judicious and clever in distinguishing between factual presentation of news and efforts of a political propaganda, he will still be able to learn from the Communist newspapers what the

204 the latest actions and decisions of the authorities are, especially in the field of internal affairs. It is not an exaggeration to say that Chinese Communist newspapers contain more information on governmental activities than did the former official Kuomintang press. Unlike the former Kuomintang regime, the Communist authorities are apparently not satisfied with the practice of publishing government or Party decisions or decrees in official gazettes, It is their intention to have such materials come to the direct attention of the people, and the most certain way of ensuring that the people will see these materials is to fill the daily news with them.

204 By making the texts of official policies or
208 decisions available to the average citizen, the Communist regime hopes to win his support in their execution. What is denied to the Chinese people on the Mainland today is the right to receive information from sources other than those controlled by the present regime. Because they obtain news on governmental activities only from official sources, the Chinese people have no way of listening to diversified interpretations of news as do the people in the United States. By providing the public with the official version, the Communist press helps the regime to mobilize public opinion and to change attitudes, but it refuses to help the people conduct a public debate on national affairs in a manner we would call democratic. Herein lies the main defect of the Communist press as a medium of public information. Therefore, the charges that the

204 208 Communist press treats as news social processes rather than events, and that it does not print news until the "official version" has been announced, are matters of secondary importance in an evaluation of the role of the Communist press in the formation of public opinion.

E. The Press as an Instrument of Public Control

Like newspapers in Communist China as a whole, the press in North China performs another function in addition to being a medium of propaganda, agitation, and public information. It has the responsibility of serving as an instrument of mass or public control. This function of the Chinese Communist press is one of the most important aspects of its total social role. Its importance can be best appreciated if one recalls the complexity of the tasks of the regime seeking to regulate every minute detail of national life. The manifold activities of the regime have rendered inadequate the formal instruments of control such as offices of law enforcement, court machinery, the procuratorates, and other supervisory agencies. To supplement these formal agencies of supervision, the regime has found it necessary to establish informal procedure of control over the execution of a tremendous number of complex regulations and orders.

One of the most important instruments of informal control used by the Chinese Communists is the press. The press performs this function by acting as a medium for official and popular criticism of the course of development of Chinese

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society and its component parts. Such a function of the Communist press, of course, is performed to some extent by newspapers in many other countries. But it differs greatly in many respects from public criticism found in the press of any of the Western countries. In Communist China, "public criticism" in the press is a formalized phenomenon, actively encouraged and carefully guided by the regime. It has little, if anything, to do with the spontaneous development of public opinion or the personal interpretations of newspaper editors or publishers. Like public criticism in the Soviet press, this function of the press in Communist China is an extension or natural development of the practice of self-criticism which prevails within the organizations of the Communist Party.

On April 22, 1950, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China promulgated a document called "Decisions Concerning the Conduct of Criticism and Self-criticism in Newspapers and Periodicals."[8] The Central Committee of the ruling party called upon the press to "induce" the masses to undertake "open criticism" of all shortcomings and mistakes in the work of the Party and government. Since that time, the newspapers in North China, like papers in the country as a whole, have tried hard to perform this function well. They do so by devoting a large proportion of their totoal space to critical decisions issued by the Party and the government and to editorials and articles expos-

8. For its text, see ibid., April 22, 1950.

204 208 ing delinquencies on the part of functionaries and institutions, in order to uncover "bureaucratic manifestations" opportunism, and deviation from the Party line. They also carry out this task by publishing "letters to the editor." Written by either the average citizen or a non-professional correspondent (the Chinese counterpart of the rabsel'kor of the Soviet press), letters of this kind usually express certain grievances and complaints or address certain appeals to Communist authorities on a higher level. More than most other resources available to the people in the region, these letters frequently prove effective in the expression of popular feelings and in securing ameliorative action from the authorities. In short, the "Letters to the Editor" columns in the newspapers not only serve as a center to which the grievances of the citizenry are directed, but also provide the Communist Party with an opportunity to check on the activities of local government and public organizations.

The political impact of self-criticism conducted through the newspapers, however, cannot be evaluated entirely on the basis of the preceding description. "Self-criticism" operates within carefully defined limits which considerably restrict its potential influence as a democratic force. The press is not allowed to criticize indiscriminately. In its decision on April 22, 1950, the Central Committee of the Communist Party cautioned that it was necessary for the press to distinguish "between true and constructive" criticism on the one hand and destructive

criticism on the other." By "destructive criticism" the Communists meant that which was aimed at repudiating the "People's democratic dictatorship," opposing the "Common Program," destroying social discipline, destroying faith in leadership, and "causing pessimism and disunity among the masses." This means that no criticism can be directed against any basic policy established by the Communist regime. Nor is it permissible for the press to make any open criticism of the top leaders of the regime itself. What the press can do is to criticize officials in a lower echelon who are corrupt, disloyal, or delinquent in the execution of certain policies of the regime. Viewed in this context, it is clear that the press as an instrument of public control is not only relative harmless to the existing regime but is actually designed and operated to support it.

F. Radio as a Propaganda and Public Information

Radio, as another medium of propaganda and public information used by the Communists in North China, should be briefly mentioned. Like the press, the radio has been recognized by the Communists as a powerful weapon of political propaganda and education. Beset by technical difficulties, the Chinese Communists did not broadcast in the North China Region until September 1946 when they established a station

207 appropriate station on the next higher level. Daily activities of the provincial and municipal stations are also controlled by the Party and government agencies on corresponding levels.

G. Radio Facilities As of June 1950, there were approximately 200,000 radio-receiving sets in North China. An overwhelming majority were concentrated in Peking and Tientsin. The few radio-receiving sets then found in such cities as Taiyuan and Paoting were owned almost exclusively by government agencies and high-ranking officials.[14] Subsequently, the Communists made efforts to increase radio-receiving facilities in this region, with special emphasis on mining and industrial centers. But the extent to which such an increase has been reached has not been revealed.

H. Radio Broadcast Monitors

207 The limited number of radio stations and 208 receiving sets, however, is not an accurate indication of the effectiveness of radio as a medium of propaganda and public information in North China. Any measurement of such effectiveness must take into account the "broadcast monitors" operating in government offices and units of the armed forces and in public

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14. People's Daily, Jan. 4, 1950.

gathering places such as factories and schools. Some of these monitors are appointed; others are voluntary workers.[15] But all are utilized to cope with the problems caused by the shortage of radio reception facilities. This practice dates back to September 1945, when the Communist guerrilla forces in North China were, for the first time, able to receive broadcasts emanating from the Communist broadcasting station in Yenan. The Communists hope that, by appointing monitors, they may make the most effective use of the limited number of radio-receiving sets available. The monitors jot down broadcasts, transcribe and mimeograph what they hear, or rewrite the broadcasts in the form of "wall newspapers," thus making it possible for the broadcasts to reach a larger audience.

The fact that monitors can help increase the effectiveness of the radio as a medium of propaganda and public information is enhanced by the two provisions contained in the "Regulations on the Work of Monitors" promulgated on

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15. See "Shou-yin-yüan T'iao-li" [Regulations on the Work of Monitors], People's Daily, April 30, 1950. When the monitors work in teams, their teams are called "monitoring stations". By 1950 every county government in North China already had such a station. In 1954, the Shansi Provincial Committee of the Communist Party declared that it had decided to establish some 1,400 monitoring stations in selected co-operative farms in the province. Ibid., May 20, 1954.

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April 29, 1950, by the Central People's Radio Broadcasting Station.[16] One provision requires the monitors to concentrate on receiving programs such as speeches made by the government leaders, social science lectures delivered by famous scholars, government decrees, news reports, and other items which might help to improve the political and cultural levels of the listener. The second provision decrees that the monitors must report to the responsible radio station their reception work and the reactions of their listeners, so that the station can check on their work as monitors and readjust its programs, if necessary, in the light of the reactions of its audience.

I. The Stage as a Propaganda Medium

The stage is a traditional form of entertainment in China. Operas are understood and enjoyed by both the literate and illiterate and are attended by members of all classes. Having recognized the stage as "an effective instrument for educating the masses with revolutionary spirit and patriotism," the Communists proceeded to make use of local operas for propaganda purposes as soon as they established their guerrilla bases in North China following the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War. Upon

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17. See Article 2 of the Regulations on the Work of Monitors.

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536 the conquest of North China, the Communists lost no time in organizing so-called "opera reform committees" in various cities of the region, and particularly in Peking, where the famous Peking opera was developed several decades ago. These committees were charged with the task of reforming the local theaters by replacing their "feudalistic," superstitious, and anti-labor themes with those that might help publicize and eulogize the People's dictatorship, the Communist Party, the People's government; awaken the political conscience of the people; stimulate the zeal for production on the part of the people; and praise the new personalities and events of society.

The reform program is a manifold affair. It includes the re-indoctrination of opera performers, the re-organization of repertory teams, and the rewriting of the repertoire. In Peking, opera reform work is directly supervised by the propaganda agencies of the Party and government, and well-known opera performers such as Mei Lan-fang, Ch'eng Yen-ch'iu and T'an Fu-ying are reportedly taking an active part in it. Unlike the experience elsewhere, opera reform work in Peking seems to have been carried out in an orderly manner without unfavorable repercussions.

Besides the above-mentioned reform measures, the Communists in North China have written new operas, trained new per-

208 536 formers, and promoted the formation of new troupes, both professional and amateur.

In order to link the presentation of operas with tasks of "national reconstruction," the Ministry of Cultural Affairs issued a directive on December 27, 1952 calling upon all professional opera teams to draw up semi-annual or quarterly schedules of performances and to submit these schedules for approval by the local authorities in charge of cultural affairs.[17] Upon issuance of this directive, the Communist regime acquired the instrument of power by which could be determined not only what operas might be presented by the opera teams but when these operas should be presented.

533 208 535 Before turning our attention from the stage, the manner in which Communists use

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17. "Chung-yang Wen-hua Pu Kuan-yü Cheng-tun Ho Chia-ch'iang Ch'üan-kuo Chü-t'uan Kung-tso Ti Chih-shih" ["Directive of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs of the Central People's Government Concerning the Readjustment and Strengthening of the Work of Opera Teams in the Nation"], People's Daily, Dec. 27, 1952.

208 spoken drama, music, folk songs, and folk
533 dancing for purposes of propaganda should be
535 mentioned. These devices, nominally planned for amusement or relaxation, are now permeated with Communist ideas and symbols. As well as the professional dramatic groups, ballad teams, and symphony orchestras in Peking and Tientsin, there are many government-organized "cultural and artistic troupes", consisting of thousands of dramatists, dancers, musicians, and singers. These troupes travel everywhere, performing in villages, mining districts, and industrial plants. Programs presented by these troupes are usually designed to enlist popular support for certain current policies of the regime.

J. Motion Pictures as a Medium for Propaganda

208 The Chinese Communists recognized
546 motion pictures as a powerful weapon of propaganda long before the North China Region came under their control. But their utilization of motion pictures as a propaganda medium did not begin until they captured Peking and Tientsin in 1949. The Communists took immediate measures to prohibit the showing of films with ideological content contradictory to the spirit and provisions of the "Common Program of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference" -- a document containing the basic policies of the regime. Meanwhile, they assumed

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546 control of the film studio in Peking, which had been left intact by the Kuomintang regime. Through the combined effort of the film studio in Peking and two others, one in Shanghai and another in Mukden, the Communists were shortly able to turn out films portraying the "new life of the Chinese people," glorifying the new regime and condemning "reactionary activities and ideologies." Meanwhile, the Communist regime continues to import Soviet films and films produced by Communist satellite countries.

Cinema theaters in the North China Region are located in large and medium-sized cities. Mobile teams have been organized to provide film showings for people in small towns and rural districts, especially at workers' clubs and reading rooms. The use of clubs and reading rooms for the showing of motion pictures has its particular advantage for the Communist Party, for it greatly facilitates the effort to integrate films with other propaganda and agitation efforts. Frequently film showings will be followed by the appearance of a local Communist agitator who "clarifies" the film's content. As it is in the Soviet Union, a good film with ideological content is a powerful instrument in the hands of an experienced propagandist. On the other hand, people who prefer not to have propaganda mingled with their pleasures may be led to avoid such programs.

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III. THE MASS PROPAGANDA NETWORK

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Besides conventional propaganda agencies such as the press, publishing houses, dancing and singing troupes, motion picture and filmstrip projection teams, schools, cadre training centers, and dramatic troupes, another extensive propaganda and agitation apparatus operating in this region is the "mass propaganda network," consisting of so-called propaganda officers and reporting officers. This "propaganda network" is not a unique arrangement in the North China Region; like other propaganda devices, it is an integral part of antionwide organization. But, unlike many other propaganda organs, the mass propaganda network operates under the sole control and direction of the Communist Party of China, having no operational relationship with the governmental hierarchy. This network was established on a nationwide basis in pursuance of a directive of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China issued on January 1, 1951, "Decision Concerning the Establishment Throughout the Party of a Propaganda Network for the Masses."[18] It was designed to intensify and broaden the work of propaganda and agitation, making it a task not only for the working personnel in the formal propaganda organs, but for "every Communist."

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18. For its Chinese text, see People's Daily, Jan. 1, 1951.

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A. The Propaganda Officer

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Propaganda officers are selected by the Party branch headquarters from among Party members, Youth Corps members, the masses in direct contact with the branch headquarters, model workers, and other active "revolutionary" elements willing to engage in propaganda work. In selection, consideration is given to the degree of political consciousness of the candidate, his sense of duty as displayed in his present work, his personal association with the masses close to him, and his potential ability as a propaganda officer.

Upon appointment, propaganda officers are given training in the ideology of the Party, propaganda materials and techniques, and other related matters. Training is conducted through so-called propaganda conferences, Party schools, and propaganda-officer training centers. Besides receiving training and instructions from Party authorities, the propaganda officer is also expected to study, on his own initiative, propagandist handbooks, news handbooks, newspapers, official documents, pamphlets, and other reference materials relating to his work as a propaganda officer.

The propaganda officer performs numerous functions including the dissemination and elucidation, under the direction of the Party and by simplest and most common of means, of current domestic and international developments; the

208 665 publicizing of the policies of the Party and the People's Government, and the duties of the masses, particularly those duties related to the time and locality in question, and the typical experience gained by the people in production and other kinds of work. Furthermore, the propaganda officer is to refute "reactionary rumors" and "mistaken ideas" prevalent among the popular masses, encourages the masses to make a study of typical experiences gained in production and other work, and to report the state of mind of the people in order to assist the Party in the choice of appropriate propaganda material.

Statistical data on the number of propaganda officers in North China is incomplete. We know that, as of February 1954, there were some 220,000 propaganda officers in Shansi Province.[19] It is estimated that the total number of propaganda officers in Hopei Province is about 300,000. Most of these propaganda officers operate in factories, towns, villages, agricultural producers' co-operatives, mutual-aid teams, and other mass organizations.

B. The Non-Party Propaganda Army

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The strength of the propaganda officers cannot be gauged on the basis of their numbers alone. It is to be noted that the propaganda

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19. Ibid., Feb. 11, 1954.

officers, who are referred to by the Communists as the "propaganda army of the Party," often enlist the assistance of volunteer propagandists, called by the Communists the "non-Party propaganda army." The number of volunteer propagandists in a given unit is usually three or four times that of the propaganda officers. On special occasions, volunteer propagandists are also given some sort of training before be ing called upon to take part in propaganda work. For example, early in 1954, approximately 1,400,000 volunteer propagandists in Hopei Province and about 800,000 in Shansi Province were given intensive training in order to help propagandize the so-called "General Line" of the Communist regime.[20]

The propaganda officers give guidance and direction to volunteer propagandists in propaganda and agitation work. Hence, the volunteer propagandists are also called by the Communists "the reserve of the propaganda army of the Party."

C. The Reporting Officer

The reporting officer is "an advanced propaganda officer" whose duty it is to render regular and systematic reports to the people on current developments, Party policies, working aims, work experiences, and so on. As such,

20. Ibid., Feb. 27, 1954.

he gives guidance to the propaganda officer, who is required to keep him regularly informed of the state of mind of the masses so that the reporting officer may be better able to make his political reports in the light of such information. When such a report is made, the propaganda officers arrange a meeting and inform the reporting officer of the mass reaction. If for any reason his report is not fully understood, the propaganda officer will clarify it by informal discussion at group meetings in order to dispel doubts or to clear up any misunderstanding.

Reporting officers are found in all provincial, municipal, local, hsien, and ch'ü Party committees. As in the case of propaganda officers, our information on the number of reporting officers in North China is fragmentary and, in some instances, out of date. As of April 1951, there were 3,090 reporting officers in Hopei Province.[21] Early in 1954 Communist press put the total number[22] of reporting officers in Shansi Province at approximately 6,000.

Most of these reporting officers were selected from among the secretaries and members of the Party committees on the provincial, municipal, local, hsien, and ch'ü levels, responsible officials of government agencies and other Party members.

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21. Hopei Jih-pao [Hopei Daily], May 15, 1951.

22. People's Daily, Feb. 11, 1954.

208 The reporting officer makes at least one political report every two months at mass meetings. Generally, additional reports are made at workers' meetings in urban areas. The topics and contents of the reports of a reporting officer are either chosen or approved in advance by the secretary of the Party committee on a given level. After the delivery of a report, the reporting officer is required to submit an account of the reception given it to the Party secretary concerned. All of these devices are designed to enable the Party authorities to maintain close control over the activities of the reporting officer.

According to the Communists, the reporting and propaganda officers have been effective in educating the masses, in mobilizing public opinion, and in enlisting the support of the masses, during various nationwide campaigns. Because they represent a direct line of communication with the Party and with local authorities, the reporting officers and the propaganda officers are said to be called by the masses the "information bureau," the "ministers of thought," and "the messengers of Chairman Mao."

IV. CONCLUSION

In North China there is in existence a propaganda machine which uses various media of public information to remold the ideology of the

people, mobilize popular opinion, and enlist popular support for Communist policies. Indications so far suggest that no organized popular resistance has been reported. Would popular reaction to Communist propaganda have been different if the Communists allowed competing propaganda and impartial news reports to reach the people? Certainly, the Communists' monopoly of propaganda apparatus, the denial to other political groups of the right to disseminate propaganda, and their exclusive control of the dissemination of public information to the masses are devices detrimental to the free discussion of public affairs and the natural formation of public opinion. As James Bryce said, Where the materials for the formation of public opinion are so artfully supplied as to prevent the citizens from judging fairly the merits of a question, opinion is artificially made instead of being a spontaneous development resulting from people's genuine consensus on socio-political issues.[23] Certainly the Chinese people would have been far less receptive to Communist propaganda if, unhampered, they were able to exercise their free well and faculties of reason.

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23. James Bryce, Modern Democracies, Vol. I, New York, Macmillan Company, 1921, p. 109.